THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (d) Increased shipping activity *inter-alia* is dependent upon growing exim trade, tax regime, availablity to finance for purchase of vessels etc. The berthing charges *perse* are not acting as a negative point in increased shipping adtivity in the country.

(b), (c) and (e) The Port Tariffs and scale of rates in major ports is fixed by an autonomous Authority *viz.* Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP) which was constituted in April, 1997 under the Major Port Trust Act, 1963. The tariffs fixed by TAMP are ceiling rates. However, Ports have the flexibility to charge tariffs below the ceiling rates. TAMP is presently following cost plus approach for fixing tariff. Endeavour of the Government is to explore if cost plus approach can gradually be replaced by normative approach. The TAMP has constituted a Working Group on normative cost based tariff for container related charges.

Over Bridge on NH in Punjab

2604. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any action plan to reconstruct or construct new over bridges on National Highways; and

(b) if so, the relevant details in respect of Punjab where construction work of new bridges and reconstruction of dilapidated bridges has been approved or is under construction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Reconstruction/construction of Road Over Bridges on National Highways are taken up depending upon intensity of traffic, availability of resources and inter-se-priority of the works.

(b) New bridges and reconstruction of dilapidated Road Over Bridges in Punjab are being under taken by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) as a part of 4 laning works entrusted to them. Further, ROB at Kurali on NH-21 at km. 26.428 is under construction on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis.